

Meeting of Friday, January 7th, 1966. M-902

With Music Tapes 936, 937.

So, where will I start, huh? First time in the New Year.

And as you know, we want to make this New Year a real good year.

And when I look at the office, the loft, and all the work that has been done, and then I sit in a chair, and I look around - it's

rather difficult to describe what one feels sometimes. It is something you can say, of course. You can say, "How lovely, how wonderful," and still it is much more than that. And whoever did whatever

they did, and whoever tried in one way or another, - and not always probably working, but to be as it were present in your thoughts, or wishing it all well, or whatever time and energy you did spend.

There is a great deal of that kind that has gone on while I was away. I'm very happy about that. I'm also happy that I have been away, for all of you to find out what it is to be without me.

And it's not that I feel that I fulfill a certain place; to some extent of course I do. But it is the realization that what is there between us and among us that has a certain permanency. And by making a break of this kind, and for me not to be always present to any kind of a meeting that you might have, you start to realize that, - what is there of your own, and what do you bring, and what can you bring?

And it takes different forms: hesitancy, sometimes on the other hand a little sureness; also sometimes a little wanting to show; sometimes a little criticism; sometimes not understanding each other, and very often of course not understanding yourself. And all of this is right because it belongs to life, and it belongs also to Work.

Because whatever belongs to life must belong to Work, and reversely. If that isn't there, if Work is not in Life, and if life

is not in Work, it is a very sad situation, because such separations should not take place. They should merge. And to the extent that you are able to merge them, and retain and keep on with both - not sacrifice one for the other, not to go over into ordinary life and forget about Work; and not to be in Work and forget about ordinary life - but it has to be mixed. First it is a mixture. The difference between a mixture and a chemical reaction is that in a mixture the two parts still stay the same. They are only mixed. You could by certain physical means separate them. If one is soluble, you can dissolve it, for instance, in water, and the other, which may not be soluble, will stay.

It is the beginning, this mixture of ordinary life with Work, the mixture of unconsciousness with consciousness. And it is not that it will go over into an absolute conscious state until all of the unconsciousness has been mixed, and then chemically bound. So that the result finally should be not what we at the present time even call consciousness, because that what we consider consciousness now is of course much too tinted with the idea of unconscious. And there is no clear concept as yet what it is to be in the state of oneness. Because consciousness is not oneness; consciousness is only a means of reaching a certain state which becomes the possibility of mixing and then combining unconsciousness and consciousness into one, together with that what one is oneself as one's being.

This is always the problem. And if you go in one direction or the other, - if you go in one direction, you forget the other. And reversely you will never reach this particular state of unity. Unity is harmony. Unity is the ability to be able to turn on or off at any one time whatever is needed for that particular moment or for that particular condition, and to have full control over that what has to

be given, and that what has to be withheld. And one learns it by introducing into an unconscious state some kind of light rays belonging to a conscious state.

It is a long, long process; and this you find out. Because when you are a little bit more on your own, you know how easily you are swayed by all kind of ordinary considerations of yourself. And even when you wish to work together physically, many times these kind of idiosyncrasies and tendencies and traits of character come to the foreground. You cannot as yet sufficiently either mask them or undo them. They become apparent. You have criticism of others. You will feel that certain things should not be done that way, but your way. And as long as you're not loose or free from that, you cannot as yet say that you are even conscious enough.

And still that kind of work must go on because it's the only way by which you gradually, through such difficulties, would mount to the stars. The stars for us are the conscious states of which we are at the present time capable. The Sun Absolute would be for us the state of unity which could be reached if one dies to all phenomena that one at the present time knows or feels.

In this year we will work. We have a beginning. It's a good place, where we are now. It's a little more spacious. We can really do something. And I must count on all of you. As long as we are together we must try to make the best of it. It is one thing that we will learn more and more, having experiences of being alone, what it is to be together. And I hope that for that also, when we make a little music, that it will help; because it is a means of getting together without words. The more we are as being, not wishing to use words, the more there is the possibility of a communion of a certain kind not dependent on words, and just to be. And then, in

that being, be open to the being of someone else, so that that then can penetrate. Perhaps it is the best way of saying what is an emotional relationship. If that kind of feeling can be there in the presence of something that one could acknowledge as perhaps having a little representation a little above our ordinary existence, then it is already sufficient to give towards that possibility then of being magnetized and attracting one. And with that one can go through life a little easier because one is lighter, and one can walk, I wouldn't say on music, but perhaps one can walk on a certain kind of air.

So I'm glad I'm back, and I'm glad all of us are here. We can drink to a good year. For all of us, without any exception.

Let me say first a few things about my trip. Everything went fine. I saw my sister and my brother. That was the main reason for going. And of course I had some talks with them, and also talked about Gurdjieff and the ideas. I don't think it was out of my mind for one moment during all this particular period. It was not always easy because many things had changed, and I of course hadn't been there for some time, so - it is of no particular use to be sentimental because whatever I could become sentimental about didn't exist any more. It had changed too much really. I didn't feel very much at home in the place where I was born, Utrecht, except of course that the Dom Tower of the church still dominated the central part of the city, and that here and there there were a few corners that I remember, and a few houses that were still standing. But much of that what I remember as a boy didn't really exist; and therefore

the sentimentality was quite useless. It has changed a great deal. Not a question would I like to live there again; I think it's absurd because my roots are here. They are not there any more. And for the sake of being there because my family happen to come from there, and a couple of members of that family are still in existence, of course that is no particular reason.

And then what else, if at the present time my life is devoted, or at least engaged in the pursuit of certain things that are at the present time quite close to my heart, logically that I think then of such opportunity of going there and trying to find out who is there with whom one can talk, and with whom there might be a possibility that something might be awakened.

At the time Bennett made a group in the Hague, of that group practically nobody exists any more. And I think it's Bennett's fault, because as you remember, he went from Gurdjieff, so-called Gurdjieff, to Subud; from Subud to Roman Catholicism; from Roman Catholicism to some kind of a Guru in India who lived long and of course was quite a remarkable man; back again a little bit to Roman Catholicism; and now he is in the direction of Sufi, and has invited one of the Sufi men, Indres Shah, - what's his name, Shah, to come over and live at Coombe Springs, the place where he always has been, the institute for, not for the harmonious development of man, but for philosophical and psychological studies. So there is Bennett. And of course anyone who might have heard about Gurdjieff from him, seeing that the master himself is kind of devious and not entirely reliable, of course what interest then would be kept?

A couple of years ago a man went over there, a Dutchman, who had been here in connection with Mendham. Probably some of you remember, Ekker. He went over there to live, and also had the in-

tention of starting groups. He tried. He had a general lecture in the Hague at which about a hundred people came, out of which he probably kept ten. He had the same kind of an experience in Amsterdam; and out of that probably about twenty stayed, with whom he has been trying to work. And he kept it together. He has another little group near Den Dolder, the place where he lives. It's in the neighborhood of Zeist or Amersfoort, not so far from Utrecht. So he is, you might say, engaged and busy in that.

I was glad to go and see him. We had some talks together. He has in the meantime completed the translation of "In Search of The Miraculous" into Dutch, which is a very good translation, and it is a very good work. As a result of talk with him, I went with him and my sister to Amsterdam to attend one of his groups. It was practically the last day before I left. And we talked a little bit, and I met them. In the first place the groups are called "Gurdjieff-Ouspensky." It's enough, of course, for me immediately to have a prejudice. I'm sorry, but there is only one Gurdjieff. Ouspensky just happened to be a pupil for a little while. So of course my admiration for Ouspensky is incomparable to anything that I have for Gurdjieff. Naturally it doesn't go together. One can lead to the other. And one may as well make a beautiful Gurdjieff-Orage Foundation. And in general, as you know, if one talks about Gurdjieff, either talk and be correct, or don't talk at all. So my impression of that was a little bit mixed, and without wanting to say too much, I had a very bad taste in my mouth afterwards.

I tried to speak about Work in Dutch. It's not so easy. Whenever there is any particular specific subject, and you haven't thought of it in such terms, it is difficult to translate. Although one manages more or less, and every once in a while you can put an

English word in which half of them could understand. And at one time, in answering a question, I went over into English entirely because I wanted to make absolutely sure that I said the right thing. And I was not so sure if I said it in Dutch that it would be correct. Well, that I had to translate again, and of course it was a little bit of a difficulty.

My main objection was that there was no exactness in what was Work, and what was meant by it. And that it again came down to kind of thinking right, feeling, and having towards it a good feeling, and almost a little mystically hoping then that Gurdjieff or His Endlessness would come down and help a person. As I say, there's very little that I believe is possible for any group of that kind.

And when he complained about not being able to hold young people there, I can understand it very well, because who wants to go to a group where it looks and feels as if they are going to start the meeting with prayer; and then for the rest of the time sit with a holy face without any particular smile on their face at all? It was quite discouraging. And I had hoped that something like that could exist. This I'm afraid will not last very long, and even if it does, it is no good because it doesn't lead to Work.

This is as far as my experience regarding the possibilities of Work are concerned in Holland with that group. I've given it up. On the other hand, I think there are a few people who might become interested, and I will have contact with them: a very old friend of mine, and another friend and my sister. Not my brother - he is taken up with some other things, and quite satisfied, I hope, with that. But I think there is a fertile soil of a certain kind; and I believe there is a possibility of building something by means of sending them some tapes. And in any event I will try to do it. What comes

of it I do not know. It will depend on the reaction after I have played one tape halfway at least so that there is something of that kind going. And I think there is a possibility, and I hope that it might lead actually to much more aliveness in Work, and the possibility of a continuation. Maybe these hopes are a little bit slanted in the optimistic way, but in any event it is worthwhile.

For the rest, being there, I said already I missed you. Many times I asked myself the question, "What am I doing here?" "Why did I really go?" Because even if one goes for the sake of seeing the family, and a little bit of ---, and most times most of them have died, naturally, then, one questions the expenditure of time, and to extract from it enough in order to see whatever the opportunities are, (it) leads exactly to the same thing as what we experience every once in a while by some major force which forces on us conditions for which of course we are not responsible, and for which we are not equipped. I looked at it that way, as if something, - I happened to go there for whatever reason, - simply opened for me an opportunity which then should be used.

And this is what I want to explain, because this is exactly the condition in which we live at the present time here in New York with this strike. Like it or not, and fulminating against it, and having all kind of difficulties that naturally have to be met, and that you resent; and wherever your particular desires go, and whatever your sympathies are, with Michael Quill or with any of the others, or the money question; or whatever their requirements are; and inconvenience to which we are put because we have to walk a little more, or we have to wait in traffic, etc., etc. All of this is an opportunity.

I say, like it or not, it is an opportunity. You won't take it.

You will keep in the state of resentment or in the state of criticism, or explaining it, or shrugging your shoulders and simply taking it for whatever it is. But you will not wake up, and you won't want to use it for that. And why is this?

I've said many times we're spoiled because we're living under conditions that are uncontrollable and not any longer in the hands of any one particular person, but that there is a certain current going on to which of course we are subject as a whole, and which happens to be a particular example of our civilization. And very often it can be expressed in the direction of saying that what we have put on the throne and what is now guiding us in our industrial development. It's a question of course for men more than for women to understand this a little bit better because their mind happens to be in that direction, and more or less adjusted to it. But at least, even if they may understand a little better, all of us are subject to exactly that kind of a condition of becoming more and more mechanized outside of us. And we, enjoying it and adapting ourselves to it, are put more and more to sleep.

If there are two sides of a man, partly his intellect, partly his feeling, that which is constantly neglected in education and even by extracting from these kind of experiences the reasons why they have happened, is that we forget that something else ought to be developed with which we could meet a condition of this kind. But since we haven't got it, no amount of even Lindsay asking for us to see that you are spending your time wisely, and not to go out unless it is essential, and that you consider yourself and to contemplate a little bit in front of a mirror; - all of that comes from a very good place, but it doesn't help any because no one understands to which particular part of a man it is directed.

And this is a terrible thing and the situation in which we are as far as our present development is concerned, that we are completely taken up by this mechanical development that we now praise so much, and for which all this money is available, including going to the moon, or including equipment of an army which also includes of course any kind of a fighting in Viet Nam; but that we, as ordinary human beings, are neglected, and that we are not even capable of extracting something from this what is a nuisance to us, something that could be useful, unless really it is made clear that it ought to be used for that kind of a purpose and for nothing else. They will settle it; don't worry. And they will pay. Everybody will pay, including us. A higher fare, and perhaps after another year it will be the same thing. And if it isn't Michael Quill, it is somebody else.

This is the cancer of our present industrial development. And no one sees it. I think someone feels it here and there, tries to say something, but without being able to go to the core of where it really could be solved, that is, an attitude of each person for himself in the development of taking these kind of experiences as something that could be useful to themselves. This is, you can say, a spiritual part of him, something that definitely belongs to his feeling center. It is not intellectual; it is not mechanical; it is not automatic. It is something that one has to feel, as if, that because of that kind of a possibility of development, one is looking for a different kind of food; to feed that food, and not to feed ourselves by being and remaining unconscious in disliking that what we experience as simply as a little bit of a nuisance.

Extract from it some reason why you should at the present time work much more, - that you should take these nuisances now

with, not with a grain of salt, and not simply say, "Well, it is nothing; it will be over." Use it at the present time to its intensity, I would almost say, for which it is given to you. Any excess at the present time in the direction of an over-intellectualism or an over measure of automatism, is now giving you a chance to see it because it comes to an extreme.. And that extreme situation can call it to your attention instead of letting it go in the ordinary way of remaining unconscious with it, and considering it just an affair of the ordinary state of affairs in life. And if you don't use it, it will go by as an opportunity, and next time you'll be even much more closed to it.

I've said it time and time again that the danger and the difficulty under which we live at the present time is exactly that so-called scientific development. And it is that misuse of science at the expense of something in oneself which should be developed in order for man to become much more whole. Don't worry too much about your intellect. It is your feeling that has to develop in a certain way of wanting a certain kind of food which is not at all automatic, and for which you have to open yourself to become much more porous to the possibility of letting it enter, and for yourself to bring to the foreground that what is your magnetic center in a wish to grow.

The growing has to be in the direction of your feeling. Your mind will take care of itself. There is enough in it. And there are enough data. But your feeling is terribly poor. And you don't dare because you cannot handle it and because you're afraid of it, that it might upset you or get you into trouble; or that when you let your feelings go that people are going to look at you and criticize you, and in all different ways will create for you a certain amount of fear on account of which you will not dare to do anything at all,

then just to be within a few little limits of that kind of an octave. It isn't even an octave of your feeling, and it should be a complete spectrum.

I've said it so many times that the only way to counteract this particular current economically, politically, or whichever way it is at the present time noticeable, that you can counteract it in yourself by simply taking it for whatever it may be; and let the so-called experts settle it for you. And maybe you will pay for it. And you may have all kind of ideas of what is wrong, and why should so-and-so not do that and that. It is all right, but where is what is really you meeting this kind of a condition by then wishing to understand yourself in your reactions towards this?

Look over what has been so far your criticism, your talk, your opinions about this strike, - how it has affected you, what at times you have said about it, and how it has affected you then; and how much energy has been spent already unconsciously, hoping that it will be over soon and then you can forget it; instead of now using it for yourself during this time as something that is, I would almost say, God-given to you because it brings out the rottenness of that kind of an industrial system that only emphasizes the existence of man as an ordinary human being, being cared for as far as his physical and perhaps a little bit of his intellect is concerned, and where his emotions are completely starved.

It does not help by saying that sometimes when you look at a motor and you see it run, or at a car which is marvellous in proportion and beautiful perhaps to look at, that that gives you a good feeling. It isn't at all that. You know it. It gives you a wonderful state of your physical body. Because then you are so-called at ease in your physical body because it feels well for

your body. It is not your feeling. You can have a little admiration for the construction of it and how it was put together, and, let's say, blame the engineers for giving such a marvellous job, doing such a marvellous job. But for you really to care for it, to care for it in such a way that it engages your heart, it's practically impossible. And it is impossible to do that regarding T.V. or any of the so-called advantages of our present civilization.

This is what Gurdjieff means by the "Fruits of our civilization." And that's what killed Ashiata Shiemash. Read again and again that book. Try to find out what is it that made it wrong, - Lentrohamsanin, if you remember his name. What was it that was in Ashiata Shiemash originally as a means of helping people to extricate themselves, or at least to help kill the results of the organ, the consequences of the organ Kundabuffer, in order for them to see what still would be possible for them, and how they could develop? And who killed it? Read it. That civilization killed it in which we at the present time live.

And as long as you allow this, you will never grow up, and you will never grow out of it. And you will have a terrible time even to remember that you ever were a feeling human being. In the first place the feeling among us, if there is a group and if there is Work, is exactly that we appreciate the attempts that all of us make regardless of whatever you can see of the result. You cannot judge about the result. You cannot say a person has to do this and that because you do it. All you can say is, "I hope they're honest." You can say that you hope that they work in accordance with what they understand. And don't criticize anyone. Leave them for whatever they are, and you show by your example that you understand that.

And get rid of criticism. Get rid of vanity, of nonsense; because all of that will prevent you from continuing to live with yourself in simplicity. Unless Work becomes simpler and simpler day after day, you're on the wrong road, I assure you. There is no room for any kind of vanity in this kind of Work.

It is something one starts to realize: - how much more ought to be done, and how little is being done day after day. And how often you forget! And this ought to give you a little disturbance, and not just because there happens to be a strike. The disturbance is in your emotional center. That is where you should be at the present time a little uneasy, because you react so unconsciously to ordinary affairs of ordinary life even if they become just a little extraordinary.

Where is your heart? What is happening to it? What is giving in to this or that regarding relationships with people? Just judging them as usual, as we do in ordinary life? And here we are a group. And we profess to be interested in something that has a spiritual value. And we forget because we judge. So-and-so ought not to do this; or why has so-and-so not been here at the proper time? Leave it. You work. Each one of us work if you can. You will then afterwards see that each person, wherever they are and whatever condition they happen to live in, they all have a place.

Like all questions have a place. Never mind who asks it, and never mind who you think should not have asked that kind of a stupid question. You have no right to judge at all. Because even if you wish, you don't judge yourself with the same kind of a measure. If you would, if you would judge yourself first, or if you apply a measure of consciousness, unconsciousness, to yourself, you will see that you will be busy enough that you will not bother about

trying to be critical about someone else. Live your life. Let someone else criticizing you and making it difficult for you the same way as the strike makes it difficult for you, - of course, it goes without saying. We remain human in that sense. We cannot help that. It is still that unconscious life that gradually has to be, I said in the beginning, mixed, gradually be dissolved, or at least used for a certain purpose. And for a long time we will remain subject to it. As long as we live on earth we are subject to it. So it is not trying to do away with it by forgetting it. It has to be faced. But face it from the standpoint of your heart. What is in it for you as a use, for you to be used for your - I almost said 'health' - your emotional health, to build it as you go along, performing your ordinary jobs and work in daily life as you now live, as you breathe.

Now use your feeling. Let your feeling become more and more apparent as a motivating force of your life, - not your body, not your little desires. Your feeling can give you much more of a real insight of what you are and of what someone else is. But you don't dare; and really you don't dare enough. And instead you are so easily carried away by that what happens in ordinary living conditions.

Don't let it. Withdraw in the morning, to come to yourself in the morning, to forget about the newspaper. Sit quietly. Collect yourself. Become for yourself one. It's the kind of prayer you must learn to say from your heart. You can use all kind of words if you like. Whatever it is that is familiar to you and that is proper, and that you have been using maybe before, or with which you were educated or grown up: put something in that word. Don't let it be hollow. But give your feeling, your real feeling becoming an emotion for you in that whatever you say: prayer to God, prayer to Christ,

prayer to the Holy Ghost, prayer to His Endlessness, prayer to Ashiata Shiemash, prayer to the hope that one can live at least for that little while in communion with something of a different kind, a higher kind of nature, so that you can yield to that at that time. And then with that you go into life with, not necessarily with your heart on your sleeve; - it is not a question that other people can look at it and see it. But it has to come out in some form or other noticeable to yourself. And those who are open, they will be able, not to see it, but to feel it! Your presence at such a time, being then, you might say, completely taken up by the expression of your feeling as a manifestation of you.

As if at such a time the pressure of such emotional energy is in you, and wishes to expand through your body, and then creates the atmosphere around it; so that people feel your presence, and feel the emphasis of what you say; and feel it when you look at them, and you want to convey to them some form of emotion. It needn't be love. It can be kindness; it can be something that will help them. Wish to help, help them to overcome the results of a strike on them, because you are and you remain, and your Being counts. Then you will settle the strike very easily because you will become settled. Don't allow things to go too far and be taken in by them. Call a halt at times, and say, "What am I doing here?" And then you can work, I am quite convinced.

To your heart.

I haven't listened to the tapes as yet of the three meetings that you have held when I was away. I will listen to it, I hope, before next week, so that maybe on Monday we can talk about it. Because it was mostly for Monday people with the so-called exercises

that the Tuesday people could bring towards it. And for the Tuesday people, they will know by this time what is required. Rather, they will probably have an idea, but it is difficult, you know, to answer questions in the correct way. It requires that you are fully conversant, of course, with all kind of questions that might be asked; that you don't get nervous, thinking that someone might ask you a question that you cannot answer.

I remember walking with Orage once to one of his groups, because there was a period, probably the third or the fourth year he was here, where I happened to be his secretary; and I took him up to the meeting. It was more or less a beginners' group, you might say, and I was helping him a little bit. And I asked him: I said, "Aren't you afraid that they might ask you a question that you don't know?" He said, "By this time I've answered probably all the possible questions that can be asked." Of course it meant that the man was completely conversant with the particular subject. And it didn't matter from what side anyone would reach it, he would always have an answer. And a good answer.

It's not only a question of having an answer. That one can acquire, I would almost say, quite easily. But to make an answer that sticks, or an answer that starts from where the question has ended, it presupposes that when the question is being asked, that already from the very beginning when you start to listen, you start to formulate already an answer. You must know from almost the first word, and definitely from the tonation: sometimes a little hesitant, sometimes a little soft, sometimes murmuring, sometimes not clear, sometimes bursting forth as it is necessary. From that one must deduce a certain way of finding out what is the level of the person. Where does it come from?

This determines for the person who will answer the kind of tonality he will use. Then as the question develops, and perhaps is formulated well enough, the kind of words will determine the kind of words the answerer can use in his answer. As the question develops, and one develops also already an answer, you might say, in one's head, at the end you have to make sure that the totality of the answer you're going to give fits with the last statement. Because that is in the mind of the questioner. And you have to link up what you are going to say with what is in their mind so that immediately there is a recognition that you have understood the question.

And then, when you have that, there is a certain relationship, a relationship of trust. It is not very much pronounced as trust because not much has gone on. But there is a willingness, because one, - on the part of the questioner, because they know that you have listened; and you also know that you have understood, or at least tried to understand.

This is when the question is fairly good. There are many questions that are not good at all, where it is absolutely necessary to rephrase, as it were, the question, and to help the person who tries to formulate to see if that is actually what he has wanted to ask. Then the starting point is quite different. At such a point one starts at the most logical thought in the question which seems to be the clearest. And from there on one starts to work it out, and include what you think might be in the mind of the person, although they may not have been able to formulate it.

But in any event there has to be a relationship established that one is willing to listen to an answerer when one knows that the question, if it comes, - and it ought to at least - from part

of one's heart; not necessarily an intellectual question or a little theoretical. It has to be said with a certain amount of feeling of wishing to find out, that then the person who answers can answer it short or long. There is no rule for that. It depends entirely on what he thinks is necessary in the particular case. Some questions require short answers. But it does not mean that all questions should be answered in a short way, because a question and an answer is quite a different affair. It is not that in the question sometimes certain things are that could be used in the answer. But the answer can always contain the answer to the question, together with a tremendous amount of extraneous material which can be used for the elucidation of what is involved in the question, and to put the question in a certain perspective.

Now for that it is left entirely to the answerer how far he wishes to go; and that depends on how long he can maintain that confidence. If that remains, he can talk from now until Doomsday, and they still, the person who has asked the question, still will listen. But as soon as the interest is gone, then an answerer must stop. He can, if he sees that the attention has waned a little bit, try to introduce something that catches again the attention. Of course it is possible. That, you might say, is like a little trick. It is sometimes like a pianist tunes one of the notes at the higher end of the scale, the treble, just a little higher, out of tune, as it were, in order to draw attention to it. It is when an orator talks, and all of a sudden changes the tone of his voice to a whisper, or puts in it a little joke, or has a pause; and waits until, as it were, the wave of attention comes back. Whatever it is, - they are allowed, as tricks. They are not necessary if one keeps on talking, and keeps

on having the attention.

And then it has to be watched very carefully, because there are two things that an answerer has to consider. One is the attention that the person has who has asked the question, and who is, perhaps, already satisfied, - and where the attention was not very big to start with, and where they might already be tired -; and the other is that the answerer gets involved in his own ideas, and with all the best intention in the world, continues to talk. That means that there is nothing wrong with it, or it's the wrong place. And it is misjudgment of what at such a time should be said.

And also it can be understood on the part of the person who answers, because they're very much interested in that subject, let's say. And then for that reason they would love to communicate it to someone who has given a little bit of an indication of being interested. And in that sense many of the persons who give answers get a little bit woozy. They don't see clear any more because they become so involved with what they wish to say. And also, and not for the sake of hearing themselves talk, - it is not that; that is a form of vanity which I don't think belongs at all, -- But when one is really interested in wanting to tell someone for his or her sake, for the sake of the person who asks, it can be understood that the love for one's own subject carries you a little bit further than is really right.

It is difficult to find out exactly at which point one must stop. And also, if the beginning has been such that you're now going to, "Now let's talk a little bit about that, and I'm going to give you a perspective so that you will never forget it," then probably you have an intention of writing a book, and not wanting to answer a question.

Now I'm only saying this because you will be faced again with meetings. You also will have certain obligations for Tuesday of having to speak about Work. You can use the opportunity when you have a meeting when I'm not there. And I will, as I've said a few times before, I will be away every once in a while out of necessity. As you know, I want to be a little more in contact with people in different groups. And it might, because of the distance to the West coast, for instance, it might take me a little longer than Boston where I can go overnight without interfering with our regular week. So you will be faced with that.

And also, as one of the requirements for Tuesday, it will be necessary that you talk about Work with others. And then you will have this particular difficulty: what will you say? How will you arouse a question if it is in the latter case, and how will you answer a question when you are faced with such a question in a group in the presence of others? When you're alone with someone, it is not so difficult. Because no one will record it, and no one will criticize it, and only the person who happens to listen. And that need not be known. You don't have to talk.

The additional difficulty of talking in a group is that the other people will listen to you, and you might get nervous. You might consider them too much. You might not be sufficiently at home in the subject that you want to talk about or you want to give an answer on. And at the same time you also might want to show someone else that you do know it, and become involved in that. Either one, of course, is quite wrong. One should simply talk for the sake of wanting to express it, to connect it with that question, and be completely free about what someone else might think, and what their opinion might be, and whatever it is that they would answer. It is

all right, but it is not your concern. Your concern is only to see that you reach a formulation of ideas, and particularly when the ideas are based on an application of such ideas that it then becomes a description of your experience, and of course you must remain quite truthful.

And you must also in the beginning only go so far as to say certain things, - what has been your experience, even without recommending it. If someone wants to use it, it is still time enough to say, "Go ahead and do it." But don't as yet start with too many tasks that you would like to suggest. At most you say, "In my case it has helped." Don't as yet consider yourself a teacher. A teacher, a leader, I've said it a few times before, will take a tremendously long time, many, many years for this kind of subject. Because, you see, the subject is not only a conglomeration and an accumulation of data. It is quite a different thing. It is something that has been accumulated within oneself and converted within oneself into a certain form of actuality, or perhaps has created a certain level of one's being based on that kind of an experience.

And since it is an experience, it is not so easy to put it again into words. If it's only accumulation of data, naturally the words will come easy, when it is relating a fact only. But here is a case where you have to relate an experience. And the experience many times was felt. And it was not put in words, not even for yourself.

And that's why I say it will take ^{quite} some time before you can put your own experience, - you don't dare sometimes to put it in words. You're afraid of it. You're afraid even that you will hurt it. And also you don't want to talk too much about an experience of your own which is a little bit intimate.

So there are already two reasons why it's difficult. And the

third reason is much more fundamental, that an experience as such cannot be put really in words. Now the difficulty is this, that nevertheless when you try it, that you may not reach the person because the experience has not been placed properly, and not linked up with the experience of the person who asks the question. So you see, here is your dilemma: you first answer the question the way you think, where it comes from, in the way you think it would be useful to have an answer. And you formulate that answer. But now you are in perspective trying to place that particular question in a certain framework, which then becomes based on your experience. And now you have to put that experience in words so as to be understood by the experience of the questioner, not by their words.

I say this is the dilemma because you have to know then for sure that the experience of the questioner was such-and-such, and may be quite different from what is indicated by words. For that you have to listen. You have to listen very carefully to the tonation to know where that kind of string of words as a question came from, and on what experience it was based.

You can help yourself a little bit if you like by asking 'how come', or where did it come from, if you don't know. And that naturally is quite legitimate, if you try to have it rephrased in order to find that out, so that then when you answer, that there is a certain unity between the questioner and yourself. Because in this, the relating of an experience of your own which should link up with the other, the original trust has to be confirmed. You see, it is the next step in the affirmation of that trust. When that is there, your answer can be right. That is, it can be considered correct. There is no, as yet, no guarantee, but it can be. And when it is, the questioner will not forget. Because they will remember that you have

communicated an experience of your own which was similar to theirs. And for that reason they will take it from you.

I dwell on this a little longer, not that I really expect you to understand it or to be able to do it, surely not by just listening or having it explained like this. You will only find out by doing it many, many times. And in the beginning you will make many mistakes, - and that when you are honest and you think about it afterwards, about how was your attitude, even if you listen to a tape and you hear your voice, which may not be entirely the right kind of a voice because you do not listen to your voice when you speak in the same way as when you listen to your voice when you hear it on a tape. You listen to your voice when you speak with your chest, with the tensions of your organs here in your throat. When you listen to a tape, you listen with your ears. It's quite different.

But aside from that, in general you can get an idea of what you have done and what you have said. And then, if you are honest, I say, and not be, not camouflaging the opinion of your own, - and simply you can get to some kind of a statement of, "it was right or wrong." You formulated right, or you have forgotten something, or you should have said another word, or you waited too long for an answer to that kind of a sentence, - whatever it might be. Be quite critical about it. It's past anyhow; it doesn't make any difference. And if you want to profit by it, you'll have to learn. But you have to learn many, many times. It is not an easy, - it is not an easy thing.

And it is not even that one has answered all the questions. It's a question; how have they been answered, and how can you maintain it, and how can you keep that kind of an audience. You see, this becomes one of the most important parts of anyone who wants to lead a group. Who can you keep, and why? Why do they, why do they stay? What is it

that you can put in any kind of a meeting, that again and again there is a certain desire that one wishes to come back? It is not that there has to be something new each time, but there has to be something new in the way of presenting, new in the way of really touching the core of that what is absolute.

Now this is a fundamental requirement, which of course is not only applicable in meetings. It is true in any kind of a relationship. It is that in each relationship towards anyone else, or towards a group of people, there has to be something. I call it a core. It is something definitely not on the periphery. It is something that is not even essential. But it is something that belongs to one's life, and comes out, and can come out; and if you're not afraid of it, very easily could come out without, as I said before, having your heart on your sleeve. But there is something that you know that the other tries to express in a certain way, even if they stammer, with material, I say, that belongs to the core.

It is material that does not belong to earth. It is necessary in such relationships. And this holds true for relationships in ordinary life, even if you don't talk about the ideas of Gurdjieff: that there must be something that is not destroyable. You have to try to make in such relationships and in meetings, and in answers you give, something that is there unquestionably, can remain undisturbed, and can make a person who hears it consider it as something they will not forget, - as if at such a moment when it is used, formulated, when it appears, that then there is an objectivity about it.

By this now I mean that at a certain time there has to be a unity of a person expressing it, by words or by posture, or by a certain way of looking, or by the maintenance of a silence; - something from him being at that moment one with what he is saying, and

putting then in that what is being said, communicated, - not with words necessarily - something of his own being, that what is alive in him, and for which at that time he has a right to give it. It cannot be given all the time. Don't misuse it. But it is a question that one wants to have an indelible memory established. When that is there, the relationship is right, and always will remain. And almost I would say, as long as one lives, one is wishing then to come back to it.

On the face of it, you understand how little there is of this kind. And at the same time it is the kind of striving that one must constantly remember. And in the attempt of doing it one should have trepidation, a certain anxiety, a certain trembling, as if one enters into the presence of something which then at that time you dare to communicate and give of yourself, as if at such a time you pray to yourself and to your conscience. So that because of that relation existing in you, it is possible that it can take some kind of a form. I say even silence can be that form, which then goes out from you, for which you remain responsible, and of which and with which you hope to reach the other person.

I'm not putting it a little bit too strict or too serious. It cannot be made too serious, and it cannot be too strict. It has to be like that. It does not mean that it can be applied with a brush. It has to be applied with an extremely fine point. And this point has to be sharpened with a great deal of dexterity in order to have it used as a point, and not to be used to hurt. This is the obligation one has when one lives with ideas of this kind. And for that reason the only way by which it ever can be communicated must be in that form of simplicity.

The reason why I call it a point is because it has to be without

dimensions. This represents a form of eternity. How much you wish to strive for this I don't know. And how much it is possible for you to experience it, also that I don't know. But it's no use to say: "Here is the sun; we will never get there." The sun always is there, and always shines on everybody. If we can get there, Glory to God! If we don't get there, at least we can get some light from it and some warmth. And it will enable us to continue to strive. When I put in myself an ideal that I would like to become such-and-such-and-such, that even if I never reach it, I will constantly be guided by the wish that I have to become such-and-such-and-such. For that one prays; for that one is quiet within oneself. And with that one tries to go through life, and to use it then at such times when it is possible, and when not even His Endlessness can have any objection.

To that kind of Life.

I want to say something else. And I mean this in all sincerity. When I was in Holland, at times I had some thoughts about us here. When I sat in the plane and came back, the plane was delayed. We were late in getting started. We had difficulty with the wind. And when we finally came in the neighborhood of New York and the airfield, we had to circle around quite a bit because we couldn't land; and other planes probably were ahead. And during that time when one sits, when you don't know that you're going around, but you have an idea that you're landing somewhere else, - in Chicago or so - one becomes looser from oneself. At such a time - and several times before - it went through my mind, supposing I don't come back? I say this in a very simple way, because, as far as I'm concerned, it doesn't matter. As far as death is concerned for me, I have no particular interest in it. And I have absolutely no fear whatsoever. ^{And} As far as that is

with me, I can die. What it will mean for myself, I know.

What it will mean for us, I do not entirely know. That is, I can imagine it. But I also know that you don't face it. Because even when I'm away for a couple of weeks, you hope I will come back. Or you expect it. Or you are more or less assured that of course I will come back, and that the plane will land, and that nothing will happen, and that out of the many accidents that do happen, why should it happen to me? And I think you are quite right, because one does not expect such things. But at the same time, you have to expect it once in a while. You remember the admonition of Gurdjieff: 'if a person can realize his own death, he will work.'

But you see, this is a little different. You could realize my death. Regarding Work then you would have a little bit more difficult time. You have to consider this, and you have to live with it once in a while. Once a week. You can do it on a Sunday. You can do it when you can exclude all the different affairs of life which at certain times are not very important. I would say, don't do it too often. But when you do do it, try to see yourself. Try to remember then what is your own. Try to see what is your life. Where does it go from here? Without me. With a few little measly tapes probably. But it is mostly up to you to continue.

And what is it in your life with which you will continue? And then I'm quite certain you will make some kind of a determination: "What is it that I can do now and that I must go through because I cannot do everything? And I cannot expect even to understand everything because my mind, nor my heart is sufficiently developed to contain it. So of course how can I shorten the time that is necessary for an experience for me to become my own, so that my life becomes my own? And then that I can give it."

This is the problem. I say it in the beginning of the year as a yearly task. I might say it again on Tuesday as something that should be done every week by every person belonging to the Tuesday group, the same way as the beginning of last year I talked about tendencies. Again and again I will try to make it a little sharper, and to face these possibilities, because they are possibilities. You must remember them. It is foolish not to think about them. It is foolish to become morose about them. It is within your own hands, your own conscience, to know what you can do and what you wish, and the way you wish to work, and the way you can work; and what you know of yourself, and how you should be.

And all these things which you decide when you are by yourself, and when you can talk really; and when you dare to listen to yourself, when you dare to want to hear it really - and then include such a possibility: "Here we are." And then again say, "Here we are." And for the third time say, "And here we are not."

It will go over into some other kind of a form, maybe prayer, if you are adapted to it; maybe quietness if that is what you perhaps prefer. Or perhaps it will go over into meditation. Or it might go over into a mystical quality, a kind of yielding and wishing, and yearning and hoping. But whichever way it goes then, always let it come back to a determination of, "But now I live. And with that I now work because I can. Because I wish."

As I say, I will say it again probably in some other form, on Tuesday. But we are a large group tonight. And you have made a special effort to come here. I'm very grateful for that. So you must have something in return, something that matches your effort. And it ought to be satisfactory for you, that you say, "Yes, I will not forget." And then it was worthwhile to come.

So I hope it is translated in your being, as if it is inscribed, inscribed with that point that I mentioned a little while ago, indelibly, like an etching. Sometimes such etchings they call 'silver-point.' It is a gold point. Silver belongs to the moon, but gold belongs to the sun. We don't wish to go to the moon. The sun is our direction, and with our back we face the moon. But we leave it for whatever it is. The moon is the past, a changeable past. But the sun has no shadow.

So, good-night, everybody. See you Monday, some of you.
Good-night.